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WRNMMC Sailors, Soldiers Deploy with USNS Comfort

By Sharon Renee Taylor
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) medical personnel departed on the Military Sealift Command Hospital Ship USNS Comfort (T-AH-20) in support of Continuing Promise (CP) earlier this month.

This is the ship's first deployment since 2011.

More than 40 personnel from WRNMMC, the flagship of the Military Health System, are providing medical and surgical care during the Continuing Promise 2015 (CP-15) humanitarian mission to the region of Central America, South America and the Caribbean during the six-month deployment. Seven Sailors from Fort Belvoir Community Hospital (FBCH) have also deployed on Comfort, according to Navy Capt. J.L. Vedral-Baron, the hospital's director.

The hospital ship arrived in Belize, the first of 11 stops, on April 9, and anticipates serving more than 130,000 patients. The health care providers from WRNMMC aboard Comfort, including enlisted service members, military physicians and nurses, as well as other specialists and technicians, will serve patients in Colombia, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua and Panama.

Continuing Promise 2015 is the first deployment for newlywed Information Technology Seaman Dustin Schoemith, who married his wife Katelyn before he left to meet Comfort in Norfolk, Va. He worked the help desk at WRNMMC for one month before leaving. The six-month deployment will be his first opportunity to help on a humanitarian mission, and Schoemith's first deployment on a U.S. Navy ship.

"I'm looking forward to it — acquiring experience on the



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Derek Paumen

Navy Lt. Bethany God, a native of Greenville, S.C., assigned to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, Md., looks inside a child's ear during a checkup at Hattieville Government School, Belize, one of two medical mission sites set up for USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) medical personnel to provide services in that country during Continuing Promise 2015.

ship, traveling to South America and helping on the mission," he said.

Ship's Serviceman 1st Class Yohannes Tesfamichael, who serves as the non-commissioned officer-in-charge of logistics at WRNMMC, said he was eager to serve on another humanitarian mission. In 2004, he supported the U.S. Marines in their role in the 14-year Liberian civil war. He said he feels privileged to volunteer time in the field and help those less fortunate who probably haven't had medical treatment in their lifetime.

The married father said his children have seen him go away on much longer deployments before. The family prepared for his tour on Comfort.

"Sometimes you have to sacrifice to help the less fortunate," Tesfamichael said.

The WRNMMC medical personnel aboard Comfort aren't the only service members with ties to WRNMMC. USNS Comfort Medical Treatment Facility Commanding Officer Navy Capt. (Dr.) Christine Sears completed a fellowship and served as a staff urologist at WRNMMC, as well as executive

assistant to former WRNMMC Commander Rear Adm. (Dr.) Alton L. Stocks between 2011 and 2012.

This is the seventh CP mission conducted under the guidance of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet (USNAVSO/C4F), according to Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Amy Kirk of CP-15 Public Affairs.

Kirk explained CP is a US-NAVSO/C4F-conducted deployment to conduct civil-military operations including humanitarian-civil assistance, subject matter expert exchanges,

medical, dental, veterinary and engineering support and disaster response to partner nations and to show the United States' continued support and commitment to Central and South America and the Caribbean.

Recent missions of Comfort include deployments in support of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, Operation Noble Eagle, in response to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, as well as Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm between 1990 and 1991.

Commander's Corner

April is Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, and this year's theme is "Eliminate Sexual Assault: Know Your Part. Do Your Part."

Our part at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) includes making sexual assault awareness and prevention a focus each and every day, and not just one month during the year.

In addition to our one priority at WRNMMC -- an extraordinary patient experience for every patient, every time, we must also take care of ourselves and each other in order to accomplish our mission and remain the Flagship of our Military Health System.

WRNMMC is 100 percent focused on raising awareness and the prevention of sexual harassment and assault. Sexual assault is criminal conduct, defined as intentional sexual contact characterized by use of force, threats, intimidation, or abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent. How can we prevent sexual assault? Raising awareness of what sexual assault is and training are keys to prevention. Sexual assault can happen to anyone, man or woman. We may not be able to prevent every sexual assault, but we can assist each other in preparing to be safe. Education of what sexual harassment and sexual assault are creates a better understanding, and will help us to build strategies to aid in the prevention of sexual violence.

What are some ways we can assist each other in the prevention of sexual violence? 1) Stay with a group. Arrive together, check in with each other frequently, and leave together. Make a plan to have a ride home. 2) Create a buddy system; don't be afraid to let a friend know you are worried about their safety. 3) Be aware of alcohol consumption. Alcohol is a factor in many sexual assaults; drink responsibly and stay in control; ensure your drink is never out of your sight to prevent tampering.

Despite prevention techniques, sexual assault can still happen. It is important that you seek help if you are a victim of sexual assault. What reporting options do victims of sexual assault have?

Restricted reporting is an option for victims



Capt. Sarah Martin
**Chief of Staff,
WRNMMC**

of sexual assault who wish to confidentially disclose the crime to specifically identified individuals and receive medical treatment and services without triggering the official investigative process. Under this policy, service members or dependents who are sexually assaulted and desire restricted reporting must report the assault to a 1) sexual assault response coordinator (SARC), 2) sexual assault victim advocate, 3) volunteer victim advocate (VVA) or 4) health-care personnel. If an assault were to occur off base, some states have mandatory reporting requirements which will automatically trigger an investigation.

Unrestricted reporting is an option for victims of sexual assault who desire medical treatment, referral services and an official investigation of the crime. When selecting unrestricted reporting, you should use current reporting channels, such as your chain of command, law enforcement, or report the incident to the sexual assault response coordinator (SARC), or request health-care personnel to notify law enforcement. Upon notification of a reported sexual assault, the SARC will immediately assign a victim advocate (VA). At the victim's discretion/request, health-care personnel shall conduct a sexual assault forensic examination (SAFE), which may include the collection of evidence. Details regarding the incident will be limited to only those personnel who have a legitimate need to know.

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) office onboard NASB is located in Bldg. 11, Rm. 119. The SAPR Victim Advocate, available 24/7, can be reached at 301-442-8225. The SAFE Helpline is also available 24/7 at 1-877-995-5247. The installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator can be reached at 301-442-2053.

More information about sexual assault awareness and prevention is also available at the DoD Safe Helpline -- www.safehelpline.org/understanding-sexual-assault.cfm; the Department of the Navy SAPR --- www.donsapro.navy.mil; Military One Source -- <http://www.militaryonesource.mil>; National Sexual Violence Resource Center -- <http://www.ns/src.org/>; and Army Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention -- <http://www.sexualassault.army.mil/index.cfm>.

Bethesda Notebook

Celebrate Occupational Therapy Month

Occupational Therapy (OT) helps people with physical, mental, or cognitive problems live independently in their homes and communities. OT is client centered: the rehab process is driven by our patients' wants, needs and priorities. Please join us as we celebrate 98 years of helping clients to live life to its fullest! The event will be held Friday, April 24 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the 1st floor lobby of the America Building (Bldg. 19). OT was founded in the early 1900s when health professionals noticed that patients who were engaged in productive and meaningful activities recovered more quickly. This realization pushed the development of a discipline focused around the use of activity to promote recovery and health. As rehabilitation professionals, occupational therapists help clients return to their level of functional independence prior to illness or injury. They help patients to develop through use of adaptive and compensatory techniques to maximize functional independence.

Melanoma Awareness Day

The John P. Murtha Cancer Center at Walter Reed Bethesda, the Department of Defense's only Center of Excellence for Cancer Care, will host Melanoma Awareness Day at the medical center on May 1. Information sessions will be from 8 a.m. to noon in Memorial Auditorium, Bldg. 2, 3rd floor. No registration is required and walk-ins are welcomed. The day's events will also include free skin cancer screenings from 1 to 4 p.m. in the Dermatology Clinic, America Bldg., 3rd floor. Appointments are required for the screening and registration can be done in advance at 301-400-0477 through April 30, at the Dermatology Clinic on May 1 between 8 a.m. and noon. For more information, call Baredu Ahmed at 301-400-0477.

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First Receivers Excel at Mass Contamination Exercise

**By MC1 (AW)
Chris Krucke
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer**

The students cheered as they heard the news: "The target goal for this exercise was 15 minutes; you did it in seven minutes and 25 seconds."

The good news came from Tom Bocek, an instructor who recently led the Medical First Receiver's Operations Training (FROT) mock mass contamination exercise at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC).

The exercise, held April 1, was the culmination of the three-day Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) required training course for the Hospital Decontamination Team at WRNMMC. The goal of the timed exercise was to determine how long it would take students to don protective equipment and to fully deploy and set up WRNMMC's Portable Decontamination Shelter to receive casualties exposed to chemical, radiological or biological agents.



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Christopher Krucke

Students erect a mobile decontaminating system during a training drill at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

According to Bocek, the course is designed to train medical staff at Department of Defense Medical Treatment Facilities (MTFs) to keep a cool head, don protective gear, set

up a medical warm zone, and efficiently operate a decontamination system for what is sometimes referred to as "the worst day in medicine."

"In a mass-casualty sce-

nario like this, the only way to keep an MTF operational is to decontaminate patients prior to entry [into the MTF]," Bocek said. "If contaminated patients were allowed inside the MTF it could potentially contaminate the facility and staff, thus shutting down the MTF's ability to operate and save lives."

In order to decontaminate simulated patients prior to enter the MTF, students were given 15 minutes during the drill to construct and make operational a portable decontamination system, "and they did it in half that time," said Bocek.

The decontamination system used by WRNMMC is a large tent with three lanes – one for the ambulatory (walking) men, one for ambulatory women, and a third for patients who have collapsed and will have to be decontaminated by the team on a conveyor system.

The system uses a water heater to ensure patients get a temperature-controlled shower aimed at 98.6 degrees,

or human body temperature. The hot water prevents hypothermia, while also opening the skin's pores, flushing out contaminants deeper into the epidermis.

"Although this is a timed exercise, it is extremely important that our team members work together," said Chris Gillette, WRNMMC's command emergency manager.

"Team roles and assignments are extremely important, as there are multiple tasks that must be completed in very short periods of time. These include donning PPE [personal protective equipment], unloading the portable decontamination shelter, retrieving all equipment, accessing the fire hydrant for a water source and ensuring all equipment is fully operational prior to the arrival of casualties," Gillette explained.

Bocek added that WRNMMC has a great decontamination team of motivated professionals, "from the lowest ranking member to top

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Employees Encouraged to Participate in Federal Viewpoint Survey



Courtesy Photo

**By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Public
Affairs staff writer**

Beginning this month, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will administer the 2015 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) and select a random sampling of National Capital Region Medical Directorate (NCR MD) employees to complete it.

Employees selected

for the survey will receive an email invitation and are encouraged to promptly complete the survey, which takes approximately 20 to 30 minutes. Responses are confidential.

OPM officials explain the survey "is a tool that measures employees' perceptions of whether, and to what extent, conditions characterizing successful organizations are present in their agencies. Survey results provide valuable insight into the challenges agency leaders face in ensuring the federal government has an effective civilian workforce and how well they are responding."

"Your honest and constructive thoughts about your work environment are essential; it gives us the best information to determine areas where we excel, where improvement is needed, and to share those lessons across the agency," stated Rear Adm. (Dr.) Raquel Bono, director of the NCR MD, in a memorandum to NCR MD civilian employees.

Bono added the NCR MD's "organizational effectiveness is derived by the extraordinary innovation, dedication, and creativity of our most valuable resource: [NCR MD staff members]. This is why it's paramount that every selected employee participates to capture an accurate picture."

"We have a lofty mission in providing exemplary patient and family care to our Nation's heroes," Bono continued. "Together, with your valuable insights, we will continue to build a legacy of pride and inspiration in the workplace," she concluded.

The NCR MD is part of the Defense Health Agency (DHA) and exercises authority, direction and control over the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, and their subordinate clinics; DiLorenzo TRICARE Health Clinic, Tri-Service Dental Clinic, Fairfax Health Center and Dumfries Health Center and the Joint Pathology Center (JPC).

The NCR MD also exercises enhanced Multi-Service Market authorities over these DHA facilities and Naval Health Clinic Quantico and its subordinate Washington Navy Yard Branch Health Clinic; Naval Health Clinic Annapolis, Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center and its subordinate Andrew Rader Army Health Clinic and Fort McNair Army Health Clinic; and Malcolm Grow Medical Clinic and Surgery Center (779th Medical Group), and its subordinate Pentagon Flight Clinic; and Bolling Clinic (579th Medical Group).

According to NCR MD officials, approximately 1,000 civilians, or 29 percent of the NCR MD federal employee staff, participated in the 2014 survey, which touched on such areas as employees' work unit, agency, supervisors, leadership, job satisfaction, work experience and work/life balance. The 2015 survey questions are based on the 2014 survey.

OPM officials explain last year's survey was administered from April through June 2014 to permanent executive branch employees and completed by more than 392,700 federal workers, for a response rate of 46.8 percent. The most positively rated item from the 2014 survey (96 percent positive) was to the statement, "When needed I am willing to put in the extra effort to get a job done."

The most negatively rated item on last year's survey (54 percent negative) was to the statement, "Pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs."



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USUHS Class of 2018 Don White Coats

**By Andrew Damstedt
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer**

With the help of family and friends, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) Class of 2018 donned their white coats at a campus ceremony April 10, in which the medical students were reminded to treat patients with humanity.

"I feel like it's very meaningful to don these coats now because there have been trials and tribulations and it's not just entering into something," said Navy Ensign Brett Monson, making reference to the fact that he and his classmates got their white coats after the first year of medical school, rather than the first day as is practiced by other medical schools.

Approximately 170 first-year USUHS medical school students put on their white coats and then recited the Hippocratic Oath led by Dr. Arthur Kellermann, USUHS



Photo by Andrew Damstedt

Cmdr. (Dr.) Adam Saperstein, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) assistant professor of family medicine, speaks at the USUHS Class of 2018 White Coat Ceremony April 10 in which approximately 170 medical school students donned their white coats in front of family members and friends.

F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine dean.

"The art of medicine is about going beyond the technical aspects of treatment, surgery, procedures and tests, to caring for a patient," Kellermann said. "The art of medi-

cine is about using and valuing the power of a smile, the power of touch, and the power of a tear."

Guest speaker, Cmdr. (Dr.) Adam Saperstein, USUHS assistant professor of family medicine, told the students

they should learn to succor their patients.

"We have to see the humanity of each person for whom we have the opportunity to care for," Saperstein said. "We must learn to see them not as walking diseases but as people who have injuries and/or diseases and have come to us for care."

He continued to say that not every day would be "a ray of sunshine, but I do know that every day you will have the opportunity to offer succor to others, to make a connection, to experience an intimacy with your fellow human being. And that is a gift beyond measure."

The white coat ceremony has been a part of USUHS' culture for nearly 20 years, said Col. Lisa K. Moores, USUHS associate dean for student affairs.

"In the practice of medicine, we are always running a fast pace to keep up with the science of medicine and this is, for certain, a major responsibility; at the same moment entering into a full human

understanding of the patient is also a critical ingredient of medical practice," Moores said.

USUHS President (Dr.) Charles Rice reminded the students that they had undertaken a great responsibility in choosing the medical profession.

"I want you to wear the coat with pride – pride in what you have accomplished so far. Pride in your admission to this ancient and honorable profession," Rice said. "I also want you to wear the coats in humility. Humility for how much we don't know, how much you will have to learn through the rest of your career. And humility in the great responsibility that has been given to you."

Army 2nd Lt. Andrew Jacobson said the ceremony was an important step in their medical education and was a reminder of why so many of them went to medical school.

"The reason we're doing this is for the people

See USUHS page 6



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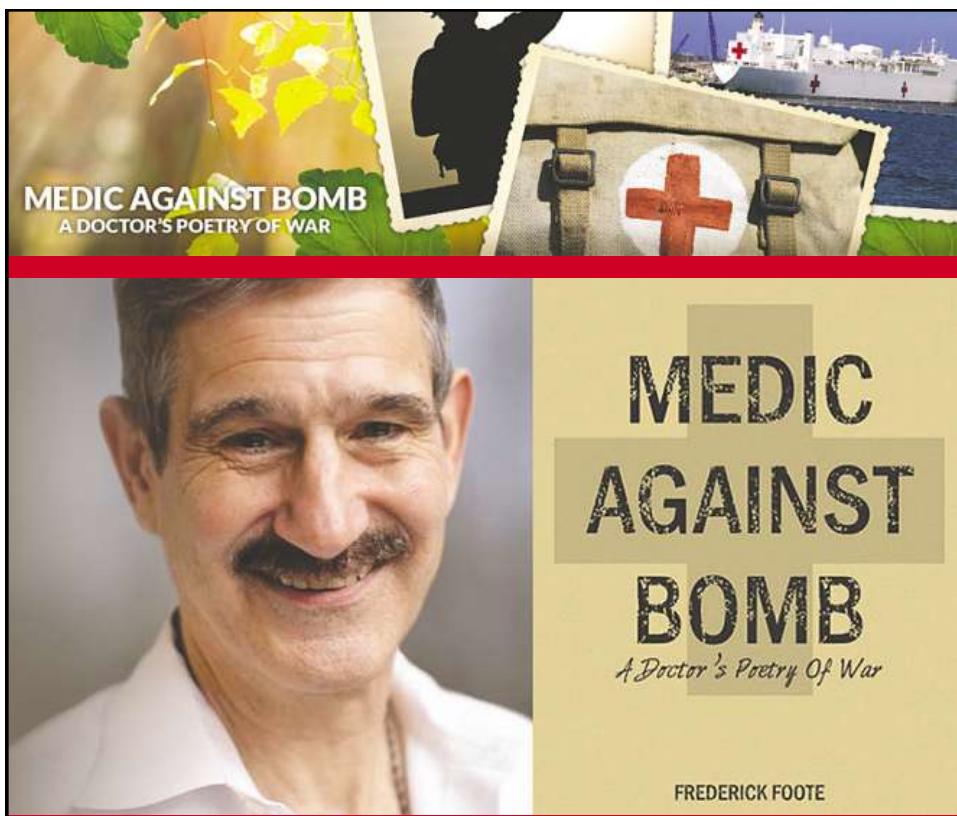
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EXERCISE

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leadership," committed to saving lives. "[WRNMMC] is an impressive and pleasurable group to work with," he said.

"When I asked the team if they felt as if they were ready for a real incident, they answered with a resounding, 'Absolutely,'" Bocek continued. "This training is so important to our nation's medical readiness capability [because] our world isn't getting any safer, and we need to be ready."

"This course is another example of

how our staff is continually engaged in all-hazards training," said Gillette. "We must be able to rapidly respond to any emergency at any time to ensure the safety of our staff, patients, and visitors, [as well as] protect our facility."

Upon completion of the course the graduates will receive a certification in OSHA's Hazardous Waste Operations to the operations level and also receive Department of Defense Medical Personal Development Center, continuing education units for nurses and also nationally registered emergency medical technicians.

USUHS

Continued from pg. 5

we're going to be treating and to really keep the focus on our future patients, rather than simply on the scientific knowledge that we're studying," Jacobson said. "While the knowledge is very important, the way we're going to apply it is what is going to make a difference."

Vice Adm. Sean Pybus, Deputy Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, came to watch his son,

Navy Ensign Alexander Pybus, put on his white coat and said he was "very proud" of what his son had achieved so far in medical school.

"I'm particularly pleased that there's clearly a talented cadre of instructors and mentors that can provide proper guidance and some of the humanity with which they talked about today," Pybus said. "His mother and I believe that he's found something that he truly believes in and has every intention to pursue to completion."

The ceremony can be viewed online on the USUHS YouTube channel.

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LEISURE WORLD: 1BR, 1BA in 2BR CONDO. SHRD LR, KIT, DR, W/D, \$725 INCL UTILS. MUST BE AT LEAST 50 YRS OLD. 443-687-3881

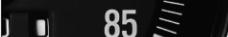
Shared Housing

LOTHIAN- Priv NS bsmpt a/wlg windows, in upscale SFH, 900 sqft, 1BR, 1BA. No pets. 10mins to AAFB, 20mins to DC. Avail now. \$920/mo. incl utils + cable & wifi. Call: 202-288-8778

Miscellaneous For Sale

SILVER SPRING / COLESVILLE: Studio 1Rm, w/priv Ba & entr No cooking, \$875. Call: 202-460-6767

Pets



Houses for Rent Fred/Wash County

FREDERICK: 2310 sqft TH, 4BR, 3.5BA, 3lvi SunRm, Window Treatment. \$1650. 301-300-4182.

Condos For Rent

CABIN JOHN- 1 bd condo close to DC & VA near C&O canal and bike path \$1500 Call 301-299-8024

Shared Housing

GERMANTOWN: 2BR, 2BA remodeled. Near bus, shops & 355. \$1390 incl water. 240-483-9184

Vacation Place Rent

GAITHERSBURG: Rm w/pvt BA in SFH \$550 Plus Util 1st and Last Month in Advance Deposit Req. Call 240-606-7259

Healthcare

MONT VILL: Rm for rent in condo, pvt ba, shrd kit, nr shops/bus. \$600 all util incl NP/NS. Call 301-602-0040

Dental/ Medical Assistant Trainees Needed Now

MYRTLE BEACH: Condo 3bedroom 2bath. Sleeps 8. Free Golf, Wifi, HDTV, Tennis Amenities. \$895/per week 301-977-4227

Houses for Rent Montgomery Co.

BETHESDA: 2Br, 1Ba, walk to Mont Mall & trans hub, \$1500 mo incl gas/water, NP/NS Call: 240-357-0122

Shared Housing

GERMANTOWN: 2BR, 2BA, pkg, 3rd flr, w/2 car gar, hrdwd firs, w/d, finish rec rm. \$2100 + utils. Avail Now. 240-426-0730

Shared Housing

ROCKVILLE: 1Br share bath in SFH. Male \$500 util cable incl. Near Metro/ Bus NS/NP 240-483-9184

Moving/Estate Sale

ROCKVILLE: clean Lg BR ON Bed, Kit, FR, TV, Int, shr BA, util incl. \$650/mo Please Call: 301-424-8377

Yard/Garage Sale Montgomery County

ESTATE SALE: 9117 Fall River Lane, Potomac, 40 Years, 4/24 10-5, 4/25 9-5, 4/26 10-5, Vintage, Mid-Century, Furn., Decor, Cash, CCDs, EstateMAX.net

Motorcycles

DAMASCUS: Estate Yard Sale. Sat April 25 & 26, 9-2pm. Tools, Plumbing Co inventory, hh items, jewelry, clothing, furn, office supp, workout equipment and more! 24709 Kings Valley Road

'12 YAMAHA FZ6-R600: 3500mi, excl cond, red/blk, 2 helmets/jackets, \$5k, 301-467-7421



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N. Potomac 20878
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OLNEY: Sat, 04/25 9-4pm. Barely used furn and hh items. Designer women sizes 4-8 Pre-teen 10-14. 3819 Gelding Lane

SILVER SPRING:
Sun 04/26 8-3, lots of kit items, vintage vinyl albums, clothes/access, kit chair set, FR/LR furn, kids toys & games, Judaic & secular books, 11714 Lovejoy Street

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